

WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

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1. An essentially dry composition comprising:
    - a) from about 0.001% to about 25% of a high intensity sweetener, by weight of the composition, wherein at least about 50% of the total high intensity sweetener, by weight, comprises discrete high intensity sweetener particles having a particle size of greater than about 106 microns; and
    - b) less than about 96% of a bulking agent;wherein the composition is suitable for use as a food or beverage.
  2. A composition according to Claim 1 wherein at least about 75% of the total high intensity sweetener, by weight, comprises discrete high intensity sweetener particles having a particle size of greater than about 106 microns, and wherein at least one high intensity sweetener is selected from the group consisting of lo han guo, thaumatin, stevioside, acesulfame K, dipeptide sweeteners, sucralose, saccharin, and mixtures thereof.
  3. A composition according to Claim 2 further comprising at least one nutrient selected from the group consisting of vitamin A, vitamin B, biotin, vitamin C, vitamin D, vitamin E, vitamin K, calcium, phosphorous, magnesium, potassium, iron, iodine, selenium, chromium, copper, fluorine, zinc, and mixtures thereof.
  4. A composition according to Claim 3 further comprising a flavor agent.
  5. A composition according to Claim 4 comprising from about 50% to about 93% of the total bulking agent, by weight of the composition, wherein the bulking agent comprises sucrose.
  6. A composition according to Claim 5 wherein at least one flavor agent is selected from the group consisting of spray-dried flavor agents, agglomerated flavor agents, spray-dried agglomerated flavor agents, granulated flavor agents, extruded flavor agents, encapsulated flavor agents, and mixtures thereof.
  7. A composition according to Claim 6 comprising from about 0.01% to about 10% of the total high intensity sweetener, by weight of the composition, wherein at least one high intensity sweetener is selected from the group consisting of acesulfame K, aspartame, and sucralose.

8. A composition according to Claim 7 wherein greater than about 50% of the total flavor agent, by weight, has a particle size greater than about 106 microns.

9. A composition according to Claim 8 comprising:

- a) from about 0.1% to about 3% of the aspartame, by weight of the composition, and wherein greater than about 75% of the aspartame, by weight, comprises discrete aspartame particles having a particle size of greater than about 106 microns; and
- b) from about 50% to about 93% of the total bulking agent, by weight of the composition, wherein the bulking agent comprises sucrose.

10. A composition according to Claim 9 wherein less than about 10% of the total high intensity sweetener, by weight, comprises particles having a particle size of less than about 45 microns.

11. A composition according to Claim 10 comprising at least three nutrients selected from the group consisting of vitamin A, riboflavin, niacinamide, vitamin B<sub>6</sub>, folate, vitamin B<sub>12</sub>, vitamin C, vitamin E, calcium, phosphorous, magnesium, potassium, iron, iodine, zinc, and mixtures thereof.

12. A composition according to Claim 11 having an Average Solubility Grade of about 6 or greater.

13. A composition according to Claim 1 having an Average Solubility Grade of about 5 or greater.

14. An essentially dry composition comprising:

- a) from about 0.001% to about 25% of a high intensity sweetener, wherein at least about 82% of the total high intensity sweetener, by weight, comprises particles having a particle size of greater than about 106 microns; and
- b) less than about 96% of a bulking agent, by weight of the composition;

wherein the composition is suitable for use as a food or beverage.

15. A composition according to Claim 14 wherein at least one high intensity sweetener is selected from the group consisting of lo han guo, thaumatin, stevioside, acesulfame K, dipeptide sweeteners, sucralose, saccharin, and mixtures thereof.

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16. A composition according to Claim 15 further comprising at least one nutrient selected from the group consisting of vitamin A, vitamin B, biotin, vitamin C, vitamin D, vitamin E, vitamin K, calcium, phosphorous, magnesium, potassium, iron, iodine, selenium, chromium, copper, fluorine, zinc, and mixtures thereof.
17. A composition according to Claim 16 further comprising a flavor agent.
18. A composition according to Claim 17 comprising from about 50% to about 93% of the total bulking agent, by weight of the composition, wherein the bulking agent comprises sucrose.
19. A composition according to Claim 18 wherein at least one flavor agent is selected from the group consisting of spray-dried flavor agents, agglomerated flavor agents, spray-dried agglomerated flavor agents, granulated flavor agents, extruded flavor agents, encapsulated flavor agents, and mixtures thereof.
20. A composition according to Claim 19 comprising from about 0.01% to about 10% of the total high intensity sweetener, by weight of the composition, wherein at least one high intensity sweetener is selected from the group consisting of acesulfame K, aspartame, sucralose, and mixtures thereof.
21. A composition according to Claim 20 wherein at least about 87% of the total high intensity sweetener, by weight, comprises particles having a particle size greater than about 106 microns.
22. A composition according to Claim 21 wherein less than about 10% of the total high intensity sweetener, by weight, comprises particles having a particle size of less than about 45 microns.
23. A composition according to Claim 22 comprising from about 0.1% to about 3% aspartame, by weight of the composition.
24. A composition according to Claim 23 wherein greater than about 50% of the total flavor agent, by weight, has a particle size greater than about 106 microns.
25. A composition according to Claim 24 wherein less than about 5% of the aspartame, by weight, comprises particles having a particle size less than about 45 microns.

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26. A composition according to Claim 25 wherein at least about 92% of the total high intensity sweetener, by weight, comprises particles having a particle size greater than about 106 microns.
27. A composition according to Claim 26 comprising at least three nutrients selected from the group consisting of vitamin A, riboflavin, niacinamide, vitamin B<sub>6</sub>, folate, vitamin B<sub>12</sub>, vitamin C, vitamin E, calcium, phosphorous, magnesium, potassium, iron, iodine, zinc, and mixtures thereof.
28. A composition according to Claim 27 having an Average Solubility Grade of about 6 or greater.
29. A composition according to Claim 14 having an Average Solubility Grade of about 5 or greater.
30. ✓ An essentially dry composition comprising:
- a) at least one nutrient selected from the group consisting of magnesium, iron, iodine, zinc, selenium, chromium, copper, fluorine, and mixtures thereof; and
  - b) from about 0.001% to about 25% of a high intensity sweetener, by weight of the composition, wherein at least about 50% of the total high intensity sweetener, by weight, comprises particles having a particle size of greater than about 106 microns;
- wherein the composition is suitable for use as a food or beverage.
31. A composition according to Claim 30 wherein the high intensity sweetener comprises from about 0.01% to about 10% aspartame, by weight of the composition, wherein at least about 50% of the aspartame, by weight, has a particle size greater than about 106 microns.
32. A composition according to Claim 31 wherein at least about 75% of the aspartame, by weight, has a particle size greater than about 106 microns.
33. A composition according to Claim 32 comprising from about 18 milligrams to about 150 milligrams of iron, per 100 grams of the composition, and further comprising at least one further nutrient selected from the group consisting of calcium, phosphorous, potassium, vitamin A, vitamin B, biotin, vitamin C, vitamin D, vitamin E, vitamin K, and mixtures thereof.

34. A composition according to Claim 33 further comprising at least one flavor agent selected from the group consisting of spray-dried flavor agents, agglomerated flavor agents, spray-dried agglomerated flavor agents, granulated flavor agents, extruded flavor agents, encapsulated flavor agents, and mixtures thereof.
35. A composition according to Claim 34 wherein the iron is selected from the group consisting of ferrous sulfate, ferrous fumarate, ferrous succinate, ferrous gluconate, ferrous lactate, ferrous tartrate, ferrous citrate, ferrous amino acid chelates, ferrous pyrophosphate, ferric saccharate, ferric ammonium citrate, ferric citrate, ferric sulfate, ferric chloride, ferric pyrophosphate, and mixtures thereof.
36. A composition according to Claim 35 wherein greater than about 50% of the total flavor agent, by weight, has a particle size greater than about 106 microns.
37. A composition according to Claim 36 comprising from about 50% to about 93% of a bulking agent, by weight of the composition.
38. A composition according to Claim 37 wherein at least about 87% of the aspartame, by weight, has a particle size greater than about 106 microns.
39. A composition according to Claim 38 wherein less than about 10% of the aspartame, by weight, comprises particles having a particle size of less than about 45 microns.
40. A composition according to Claim 39 comprising from about 0.1% to about 3% of the aspartame, by weight of the composition.
41. A composition according to Claim 40 comprising iodine.
42. A composition according to Claim 40 wherein the iron is a ferrous amino acid chelate.
43. A composition according to Claim 42 having an Average Solubility Grade of about 6 or greater.
44. A composition according to Claim 30 having an Average Solubility Grade of about 5 or greater.

45. An essentially dry composition comprising:

- a) from about 0.001% to about 25% of aspartame, by weight of the composition, wherein at least about 50% of the aspartame, by weight, comprises discrete aspartame particles having a particle size of greater than about 106 microns; and
- b) less than about 96% of a bulking agent;

wherein the composition is suitable for use as a food or beverage.

46. A composition according to Claim 45 wherein at least about 75% of the aspartame, by weight, comprises discrete aspartame particles having a particle size of greater than about 106 microns.

47. A composition according to Claim 46 further comprising at least one nutrient selected from the group consisting of vitamin A, vitamin B, biotin, vitamin C, vitamin D, vitamin E, vitamin K, calcium, phosphorous, magnesium, potassium, iron, iodine, selenium, chromium, copper, fluorine, zinc, and mixtures thereof.

48. A composition according to Claim 47 further comprising a flavor agent.

49. A composition according to Claim 48 comprising from about 50% to about 93% of the total bulking agent, by weight of the composition, wherein the bulking agent comprises sucrose.

50. A composition according to Claim 49 wherein at least one flavor agent is selected from the group consisting of spray-dried flavor agents, agglomerated flavor agents, spray-dried agglomerated flavor agents, granulated flavor agents, extruded flavor agents, encapsulated flavor agents, and mixtures thereof.

51. A composition according to Claim 50 wherein greater than about 50% of the total flavor agent, by weight, has a particle size greater than about 106 microns.

52. A composition according to Claim 51 comprising from about 0.1% to about 3% of the aspartame, by weight of the composition.

53. A composition according to Claim 52 wherein less than about 10% of the aspartame, by weight, comprises aspartame particles having a particle size of less than about 45 microns.

54. A composition according to Claim 53 comprising at least three nutrients selected from the group consisting of vitamin A, riboflavin, niacinamide, vitamin B<sub>6</sub>, folate, vitamin B<sub>12</sub>,

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vitamin C, vitamin E, calcium, phosphorous, magnesium, potassium, iron, iodine, zinc, and mixtures thereof.

55. A composition according to Claim 54 having an Average Solubility Grade of about 6 or greater.

56. A composition according to Claim 45 having an Average Solubility Grade of about 5 or greater.

57. An essentially dry composition comprising:

a) from about 0.001% to about 25% of aspartame, wherein at least about 82% of the aspartame, by weight, comprises particles having a particle size of greater than about 106 microns; and

b) less than about 96% of a bulking agent, by weight of the composition;

wherein the composition is suitable for use as a food or beverage.

58. A composition according to Claim 57 further comprising at least one nutrient selected from the group consisting of vitamin A, vitamin B, biotin, vitamin C, vitamin D, vitamin E, vitamin K, calcium, phosphorous, magnesium, potassium, iron, iodine, selenium, chromium, copper, fluorine, zinc, and mixtures thereof.

59. A composition according to Claim 58 further comprising a flavor agent.

60. A composition according to Claim 59 comprising from about 50% to about 93% of the total bulking agent, by weight of the composition, wherein the bulking agent comprises sucrose.

61. A composition according to Claim 60 wherein at least one flavor agent is selected from the group consisting of spray-dried flavor agents, agglomerated flavor agents, spray-dried agglomerated flavor agents, granulated flavor agents, extruded flavor agents, encapsulated flavor agents, and mixtures thereof.

62. A composition according to Claim 61 comprising from about 0.01% to about 10% of the aspartame, by weight of the composition.

63. A composition according to Claim 62 comprising from about 0.1% to about 3% aspartame, by weight of the composition, wherein at least about 87% of the aspartame, by weight, comprises particles having a particle size greater than about 106 microns.

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64. A composition according to Claim 63 wherein less than about 10% of the aspartame, by weight, comprises particles having a particle size of less than about 45 microns.
65. A composition according to Claim 64 wherein greater than about 50% of the total flavor agent, by weight, has a particle size greater than about 106 microns.
66. A composition according to Claim 65 wherein less than about 5% of the aspartame, by weight, comprises particles having a particle size less than about 45 microns.
67. A composition according to Claim 66 wherein at least about 92% of the aspartame, by weight, comprises particles having a particle size greater than about 106 microns.
68. A composition according to Claim 67 comprising at least three nutrients selected from the group consisting of vitamin A, riboflavin, niacinamide, vitamin B<sub>6</sub>, folate, vitamin B<sub>12</sub>, vitamin C, vitamin E, calcium, phosphorous, magnesium, potassium, iron, iodine, zinc, and mixtures thereof.
69. A composition according to Claim 68 having an Average Solubility Grade of about 6 or greater.
70. A composition according to Claim 69 having an Average Solubility Grade of about 5 or greater.
71. An essentially dry composition comprising:
- a) at least one nutrient selected from the group consisting of magnesium, iron, iodine, zinc, selenium, chromium, copper, fluorine, and mixtures thereof; and
  - b) from about 0.001% to about 25% of aspartame, by weight of the composition, wherein at least about 50% of the aspartame, by weight, comprises particles having a particle size of greater than about 106 microns;
- wherein the composition is suitable for use as a food or beverage.
72. A composition according to Claim 71 comprising from about 0.01% to about 10% aspartame, by weight of the composition.
73. A composition according to Claim 72 wherein at least about 75% of the aspartame, by weight, has a particle size greater than about 106 microns.



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74. A composition according to Claim 73 comprising from about 18 milligrams to about 150 milligrams of iron, per 100 grams of the composition, and further comprising at least one further nutrient selected from the group consisting of calcium, phosphorous, potassium, vitamin A, vitamin B, biotin, vitamin C, vitamin D, vitamin E, vitamin K, and mixtures thereof.
75. A composition according to Claim 74 further comprising at least one flavor agent selected from the group consisting of spray-dried flavor agents, agglomerated flavor agents, spray-dried agglomerated flavor agents, granulated flavor agents, extruded flavor agents, encapsulated flavor agents, and mixtures thereof.
76. A composition according to Claim 75 wherein the iron is selected from the group consisting of ferrous sulfate, ferrous fumarate, ferrous succinate, ferrous gluconate, ferrous lactate, ferrous tartrate, ferrous citrate, ferrous amino acid chelates, ferrous pyrophosphate, ferric saccharate, ferric ammonium citrate, ferric citrate, ferric sulfate, ferric chloride, ferric pyrophosphate, and mixtures thereof.
77. A composition according to Claim 76 wherein greater than about 50% of the total flavor agent, by weight, has a particle size greater than about 106 microns.
78. A composition according to Claim 77 comprising from about 50% to about 93% of a bulking agent, by weight of the composition.
79. A composition according to Claim 78 wherein at least about 87% of the aspartame, by weight, has a particle size greater than about 106 microns.
80. A composition according to Claim 79 wherein less than about 10% of the aspartame, by weight, comprises particles having a particle size of less than about 45 microns.
81. A composition according to Claim 80 comprising from about 0.1% to about 3% of aspartame, by weight of the composition.
82. A composition according to Claim 81 comprising iodine.
83. A composition according to Claim 81 wherein the iron is a ferrous amino acid chelate.

84. A composition according to Claim 83 having an Average Solubility Grade of about 6 or greater.

85. A composition according to Claim 71 having an Average Solubility Grade of about 5 or greater.

86. A method of preparing an essentially dry composition suitable for use as a food or beverage comprising:

- a) providing a first ingredient set;
- b) providing a second ingredient set comprising from about 0.001% to about 25% of a high intensity sweetener, by weight of the composition; and
- c) combining the first set of ingredients and the second set of ingredients;

wherein after providing the second ingredient set, the second ingredient set is subjected to less than about 6 kJ / kg of work input.

87. A method according to Claim 86 wherein after providing the first ingredient set, the first ingredient set is subjected to about 4 kJ / kg or greater of work input, and wherein the first ingredient set is subjected to greater work input relative to the second ingredient set.

88. A method according to Claim 87 wherein the first ingredient set comprises less than about 96% of a bulking agent, by weight of the composition, and the second ingredient set comprises aspartame and further comprises a flavor agent.

89. A method according to Claim 88 wherein after providing the first ingredient set, the first ingredient set is subjected to about 8 kJ / kg or greater of work input and wherein after providing the second ingredient set, the second ingredient set is subjected to less than about 4 kJ / kg of work input.

90. A method according to Claim 89 wherein at least one flavor agent is selected from the group consisting of spray-dried flavor agents, agglomerated flavor agents, spray-dried agglomerated flavor agents, granulated flavor agents, extruded flavor agents, encapsulated flavor agents, and mixtures thereof.

91. A method according to Claim 90 wherein the first ingredient set comprises at least three nutrients selected from the group consisting of vitamin A, vitamin B, biotin, vitamin C, vitamin D, vitamin E, vitamin K, calcium, phosphorous, magnesium, potassium, iron, iodine,

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selenium, chromium, copper, fluorine, and zinc and the second ingredient set comprises aspartame.

92. A method according to Claim 91 wherein the first ingredient set comprises sucrose.
93. A beverage comprising the composition according to Claim 1 selected from the group consisting of:
- a) a ready-to-drink beverage comprising, by weight of the beverage, from about 0.01% to about 30% of the composition; and
  - b) a concentrate comprising, by weight of the beverage, from about 1% to about 80% of the composition
94. A beverage comprising the composition according to Claim 14 selected from the group consisting of:
- a) a ready-to-drink beverage comprising, by weight of the beverage, from about 0.01% to about 30% of the composition; and
  - b) a concentrate comprising, by weight of the beverage, from about 1% to about 80% of the composition.
95. A beverage comprising the composition according to Claim 30 selected from the group consisting of:
- a) a ready-to-drink beverage comprising, by weight of the beverage, from about 0.01% to about 30% of the composition; and
  - b) a concentrate comprising, by weight of the beverage, from about 1% to about 80% of the composition.
96. A beverage comprising the composition according to Claim 45 selected from the group consisting of:
- a) a ready-to-drink beverage comprising, by weight of the beverage, from about 0.01% to about 30% of the composition; and
  - b) a concentrate comprising, by weight of the beverage, from about 1% to about 80% of the composition.
97. A beverage comprising the composition according to Claim 57 selected from the group consisting of:
- a) a ready-to-drink beverage comprising, by weight of the beverage, from about 0.01% to about 30% of the composition; and

